

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PA-04 PRS-01 USIA-15 PM-07 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 AID-20 OMB-01 DRC-01 /075 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1018

INFO USSAG

CINCPAC

DOD WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 3335

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, EAID, TH

SUBJ: PRESS VISIT TO USSAG HEADQUARTERS

REFS: (A) BANGKOK 2691; (B) BANGKOK 2553

DOD FOR ASD/PA

1. AS ANTICIPATED REF A, AMERICAN PRESS HAS RAISED
ISSUE OF VISITING GENERAL O'KEEFE AT USSAG HEADQUARTERS,
NAKHON PHANOM RTAFB, UNDER TERMS OF SECTION 29 OF
FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT AS AMENDED.

2. JACK FOISIE, BANGKOK REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LOS ANGELES
TIMES, ADDRESSED FOLLOWING LETTER TO AMBASSADOR KINTNER
DATED FEBRUARY 25.

QUOTE: DEAR MR. AMBASSADOR, I TAKE THE LIBERTY OF
RENEWING THE SUBJECT WHICH WE DISCUSSED BRIEFLY IN YOUR
FIRST TWO MEETINGS WITH AMERICAN CORRESPONDENTS: REGULAR
INDIVIDUAL ENTRY INTO OUR BASES ON THAI SOIL BY BONA
FIDE NEWS MEDIA OF THE U.S., BASED HERE OR ELSEWHERE. (PARA)
MY REASON FOR WRITING TO YOU AT THIS TIME IS TO ASK
YOUR ASSISTANCE IN ESTABLISHING REASONABLE ENTRY IN
ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 29 OF PUBLIC LAW 93-189, IN
WHICH CONGRESS LAST DECEMBER AMENDED PARTS OF THE FOREIGN
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ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1961. (PARA)

AS YOU ARE UNDOUBTEDLY AWARE, SECTION 29, WHICH I BELIEVE WAS INSERTED THROUGH THE GOOD OFFICES OF SENATORS MANSFIELD AND CRANSTON, CALLS FOR THE WITHHOLDING OF AID FUNDS TO FOREIGN NATIONS IN WHICH AMERICAN-BUILT BASES ARE LOCATED IF THERE IS NOT REASONABLE ACCESS BY LEGITIMATE U.S. CORRESPONDENCE (SIC) TO THOSE BASES TO REPORT ON NON-CLASSIFIED AMERICAN ACTIVITIES. (PARA) I ADDRESS MY REQUEST TO YOU, KIND SIR, AS HEAD OF THE AMERICAN MISSION IN THAILAND, AND ASK FOR THE OPPORTUNITY, AS SOON AS MUTUALLY CONVENIENT TO ALL CONCERNED, TO MAKE AN INDIVIDUAL VISIT TO NAKHON PHANOM ROYAL THAI AIR FORCE BASE. (PARA)

MY PURPOSE IS MORE THAN TO TEST THE LEGISLATION. FOR MANY MONTHS NOW I HAVE ASKED THE APPROPRIATE PRESS RELATIONS PEOPLE TO GO TO NKP AND CHAT WITH GENERAL O'KEEFE. MY INTEREST IS HARMLESS-JUST A FEATURE ABOUT THE FOUR-STAR GENERAL WHO LIVES IN THE BOONDOCKS. IT IS THE TYPE OF STORY THAT CAN ONLY BE DONE ALONE, WITHOUT A GANGBANG OF CORRESPONDENTS, AND THEREFORE MY REQUEST IS FOR A SOLO SORTIES (PARA)

I WOULD GREATLY APPRECIATE YOUR ASSISTANCE IN THIS MATTER. (SIGNED) SINCRELY, JACK FOISIE, LOS ANGELES TIMES. END QUOTE.

3. WE INTEND TO SEND FOLLOWING REPLY TO FOISIE MARCH 4, SUBJECT TO DEPARTMENT'S CONCURRENCE:

BEGIN TEXT: I HAVE RECEIVED YOUR LETTER OF FEBRUARY 25 PROPOSING A VISIT TO NKP RTAFB FOR THE PURPOSE OF INTERVIEWING GENERAL O'KEEFE, (PARA) I AM OF COURSE FAMILIAR WITH THE TERMS OF SECTION 29 OF THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT AS AMENDED. YOU MAY BE INTERESTED IN THE ENCLOSED TEXT OF THE PRESIDENT'S DETERMINATION DATED JANUARY 28, 1974, WHICH IS PERTINENT TO THE QUESTION OF ACCESS TO ROYAL THAI BASES FROM WHICH US FORCES OPERATE. (PARA)

THE ROYAL THAI GOVERNMENT HAS APPROVED MANY RECENT VISITS TO BASES IN THAILAND FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF THE AMERICAN, FOREIGN AND THAI MEDIA. THE LAST TWO SUCH VISITS TO NKP RTAFB WERE CONDUCTED IN JANUARY 1974; I BELIEVE THAT AN INVITATION WAS EXTENDED TO THE LOS ANGELES TIMES TO JOIN AT LEAST ONE OF THESE PRESS VISITS. (PARA) TO REDUCE INTERRUPTIONS TO UNIT OPERATIONS AND THE CONFIDENTIAL

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WORKLOAD ON AUSTERE HEADQUARTERS STAFFS, IT HAS BEEN OUR PRACTICE TO SCHEDULE VISITS TO INDIVIDUAL BASES AND UNITS TO MEET REQUESTS FROM THE NEWS MEDIA, AND TO INVITE OTHER REPRESENTATIVES RESIDENT IN BANGKOK OR IN THE AREA TO TAKE PART. WE BELIEVE THAT THIS PRACTICE IS FULLY CONSISTENT WITH THE INTENT OF THE CONGRESS. (PARA) WITH RESPECT TO YOUR INTEREST IN VISITING NKP RTAFB TO INTERVIEW GENERAL O'KEEFE, THE EMBASSY CONSIDERS THAT NATIONAL SECURITY

CONSIDERATIONS PRECLUDE VISITS BY MEDIA REPRESENTATIVE TO THIS
HEADQUARTERS. THE EXCEPTION OF CERTAIN INSTALLATIONS FROM NEWS COVER-

AGE WAS ANTICIPATED AND ENDORSED BY THE TERMS OF THE RECENT
CONGRESSIONAL AMENDMENT. (PARA)

I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU AND OTHER AMERICAN
NEWSMEN CN EXPLAINING AMERICAN POLICIES AND GOVERNMENT
ACTIVITIES IN THAILAND AND IN FACILITATING PRESS VISITS
TO AMERICAN UNITS WHEREVER SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS ALLOW.
END TEXT.

3. ACTION REQUESTED: PLEASE P
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